

pretreating the plants by shortening and separating the plant stems thereby forming a fibre mass of vegetable fibres, forming a mat with randomly oriented fibres by a dry forming process, forming inter-fibre bonds between the fibres for fixing the mat with the bonded fibres.

15. (Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the forming

C2 inter-fibre bonds comprises partially establishing the bonds during fibrillation of the fibres.

17. (Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the forming

C3 fibres comprises forming fibres of similar material.

23. (Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the forming

C4 inter-fibre bonds comprises applying binders for establishing the inter-fibre bonds.

26. (Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the pre-

C5 treatment further comprises scutching the stems in a hammer mill thereby shortening the fibres to a desired length and separating the fibres within a desired length interval by a rotating riddle, and wherein the dry-forming comprises forming some of the fibres into the mat by blowing the fibres into a forming head disposed above a forming wire.

27. (Amended) The method of claim 26, wherein the forming the mat comprises adding between about 0 % and 50 % binder for fixing the formed mat.

C6 29. (Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the shortening and separating the plant stems comprises shortening and separating in a dry condition, and wherein the pre-treating

*C6*  
further comprises pulping the plant stems by boiling in purified water under pressure or in an extruder, chemically treating the fibres, washing and drying the fibres before dry-forming the fibres into the mat.

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34. (Amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the forming the absorbing mat comprises incorporating the absorbing mat on a molded composite product.

*C7*  
35. (Amended) The method of claim 33, wherein the forming the absorbing mat comprises incorporating the absorbing mat on a strongly reinforced composite product.

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